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PERSONAL STATEMENT

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I received my Ph.D. in sociology from Princeton University in 1976. I joined the UO Sociology Department as an Assistant Professor in January 1978, was promoted to Associate Professor in 1983, and then to Professor in 1992. My last sixth year review was in March 2003. This statement will address the period from March 1, 2003 to the present.

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

During the last six years I have published articles in three of the top four journals of the discipline: *American Sociological Review*, *American Journal of Sociology*, and *Social Problems*. I have also published two articles in highly regarded, peer-reviewed specialty journals, as well as three book chapters, two book reviews, and a review essay. One article written in an earlier period was recently reprinted. I have been a regular presenter and session organizer at meetings of the American Sociological Association and other professional associations. During these six years I have been an invited speaker at events sponsored by the National Academy of Sciences in Washington DC, the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation in Berlin, the Harriman Institute at Columbia University, the Landsdowne Lecture series at the University of Victoria, the Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change at the University of Manchester, and other venues. I received faculty summer research awards from the University of Oregon in both 2004 and 2009. I applied (unsuccessfully) for a NSF grant in 2008 and I currently have a second NSF grant under review. I also continue to manage a website that I created, titled *Who Rules? An Internet Guide to Power Structure Research* (www.uoregon.edu/~vburris/whorules).

My primary area of research interest concerns the structure of corporate networks and the politics of corporations and corporate elites. Recent publications in this area include "Interlocking Directorates and Political Cohesion among Corporate Elites," published in *AJS* in 2005. Utilizing data on contributions to political candidates, this paper provides the strongest empirical evidence yet assembled to demonstrate the important role that director interlocks play in forging elite political cohesion. One of the relatively novel aspects of the paper is that it examines elite cohesion in terms of the political behavior of individual capitalists, rather than the behavior of corporations as organizations. Research on individual elites is much more demanding from the standpoint of data collection than research on corporations. Nevertheless, I maintain that this approach yields more significant findings and provides a more appropriate test of key theories in the field of power structure research. Methodologically, the paper also was one of the first to introduce the method of quadradic assignment procedure (QAP) regression to the readers of a leading, generalist sociology journal.

Another recent publication in this area is "The Interlock Structure of the Policy-Planning Network and the Right Turn in U.S. State Policy," published in *Research in Political Sociology* in 2008. Like the abovementioned article, this paper analyzes the political implications of director interlocks — but in this instance the focus is on directors of leading policy-planning organizations rather than corporations. The paper uses techniques of multidimensional scaling and hierarchical clustering to create topographical maps of inter-organizational ties among policy-planning groups and their change over time. The analysis reveals the continuing centrality within the policy-planning network of peak, big-business associations like the Business Council and the Business

Roundtable. But it also reveals significant shifts in inter-organizational alignments. In the early and mid-1970s, for example, the core of the policy-planning network included "corporate liberal" policy organizations like the Brookings Institution and the Council on Foreign Relations. In the 1980s and 1990s, these organizations became relatively isolated from the core and their places were taken by more conservative groups like the American Enterprise Institute and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. These changes in the structure of the policy network are interpreted as consistent with the rightward shift in U.S. state policy during the late 1970s and 1980s, and are scrutinized for new insights into the interpersonal and inter-organizational alliances that made that policy shift possible.

My most recent publication in this area is a book chapter titled "Corporations, Capitalists, and Campaign Finance," which is forthcoming in *The Handbook of Politics: State and Civil Society in Global Perspective*. The volume is edited by Kevin Leicht and Craig Jenkins, and contains chapters by many of the leading names in political sociology. My own chapter (comprising 36 manuscript pages) presents an overview and critical evaluation of more than 70 years of research on the extent, pattern, and consequences of campaign contributions by large corporations and wealthy capitalists.

Some of my recent publications have also applied methods of social network analysis to other topics, such as the structure of academic professions and processes of innovation diffusion. The most noteworthy of these publications is "The Academic Caste System: Prestige Hierarchies in Ph.D. Exchange Networks," published in *ASR* in 2004. Whereas the conventional wisdom interprets the prestige of academic departments as rooted in scholarly productivity, I draw on the theories of Weber and Bourdieu to advance an alternative view of departmental prestige, which I conceptualize as an effect of the position of departments within networks of association and social exchange. The network created by the exchange of Ph.D.'s among departments is the most important network of this kind. Departmental prestige, I argue, is reproduced primarily by social closure and the accumulation of social capital in the hiring and placement of Ph.D.'s. Using data on the exchange of Ph.D.'s among departments of sociology, history, and political science, I apply network analysis to investigate this alternative conception of prestige and to demonstrate its superiority over the conventional view. This alternative understanding of academic prestige helps clarify anomalies encountered in research based on the conventional view, including the great variance in departmental prestige that remains unexplained by scholarly productivity, the strong association between department size and prestige, and the extraordinary stability of departmental prestige rankings over long time periods.

Although I would not consider public opinion research to be one of my main areas of specialization, periodically over the years I have undertaken studies of this type on topics of political interest. My most recent foray into this field is "From Vietnam to Iraq: Continuity and Change in Between-Group Differences in Support for Military Action," published in *Social Problems* in 2008. My interest in this topic goes all the way back to my graduate student days in the early 1970s when many of the classic sociological studies of public opinion on the Vietnam War were published. My interest was rekindled by the first Gulf War in 1990-91 when I did a small study on race and gender differences in attitudes to the war that I presented at a Brookings Institution workshop on the Political Consequences of War. In the following years I continued to track public opinion on various instances of U.S. military intervention around the globe — more as a personal interest than as a professional pursuit. However, when the U.S. invaded Iraq in 2003 I decided it would be worthwhile to pull together the data I had collected and the preliminary research I had done and write an analysis of the evolution of public attitudes to war from the Vietnam era to the present. After a search of the literature, I discovered that this was a topic that sociologists had largely abandoned after Vietnam, and that research on attitudes toward

military action had largely been taken over by political scientists. I was generally impressed by the political science literature that I read, but one of the glaring omissions was the failure to address between-group differences in pro- and antiwar sentiment of the sort that had been the focus of the classic sociological studies of the Vietnam War. The *Social Problems* article is intended to revive interest in this approach to studying public opinion on issues of war and peace. The paper analyzes data from more than 200 surveys, spanning the years from 1964 to 2006 with a focus on between-group differences by gender, race, education, income, and age. Techniques of meta-analysis are used to condense these findings into a presentable form. The results are not easily summarized, but suffice to say the gender and racial differences in support for war have remained relatively stable. Women and minorities have tended to be more strongly opposed to military action, albeit with some interesting variation from one foreign policy context to another. On the other hand, there have been significant changes in the status and age correlates of pro- and antiwar opinion. Specifically, highly educated persons and younger persons have become significantly more opposed to the use of military force as compared with the Vietnam era. Reflecting on these findings, the paper makes the case that between-group differences in attitudes to war are a crucial intervening factor in assessing the impact of public opinion on the conduct of U.S foreign policy as well as the possibilities for political mobilization on issues of war and peace.

My current work-in-progress is focused in three main areas. (1) Working in collaboration with Clifford Staples at the University of North Dakota, I have assembled a dataset on director interlocks among the *Fortune* Global 500 largest corporations, which we are using to analyze trends in global corporate integration and the emergence of a transnational capitalist class. I presented some preliminary results of this research at the International Sociological Association meeting in Barcelona this past summer. (2) I am also collaborating with Reza Rejaie of the UO Computer and Information Science Department on a long-term project on the social significance of online social networks. We have submitted two NSF grant applications on this topic. Earlier this year Professor Rejaie and I assembled an interdisciplinary team of faculty from sociology, computer science, mathematics, psychology, communications, and business who share our interest in online social networks. We have been meeting weekly to discuss potential research and educational initiatives in this area and are posting a "Big Idea" for possible inclusion in the UO Academic Plan. (3) I am conducting research on patterns of corporate financing of non-profit organizations in the areas of public affairs and political advocacy (policy planning, civil rights, health and human services, environment and wildlife, education, community development, and international development). The research utilizes an extensive, multi-year dataset that I collected from such sources as the Foundation Center, Capital Research Center, Center for Corporate Philanthropy, Conference Board, and the Internal Revenue Service. Preliminary findings were presented at a recent meeting of the American Sociological Association and I am currently at work on a journal article based on this research.

TEACHING AND MENTORING

Undergraduate Teaching

During the past six years my undergraduate teaching has been concentrated in two courses: Development of Sociology (Soc 310), and Political Sociology (Soc 465). I teach Development of Sociology, the required theory course for undergraduate majors, on a regular basis. My approach to this course emphasizes teaching students to "think sociologically" — i.e., to grasp and creatively apply the underlying logic(s) of sociological explanation. The class is therefore as much a course in theory *construction* as it is a conventional history of social theory. I find that

many students initially have a difficult time with this type of material, although most make significant strides during the course of a term.

I also like to impart to my students the practical skills needed to conduct their own research. I believe I have been most successful in this in my Political Sociology course. Rather than teaching a traditional survey of political sociology, I have added a strong research focus to this course in which students learn and apply various methods of power structure research. In recent years students in my course have investigated the social and economic backgrounds of cabinet appointees, analyzed the pattern of campaign contributions in a congressional election, constructed a political profile of a major U.S. corporation, and traced the corporate and political connections of leading policy-planning groups. I find this to be the most rewarding of my undergraduate courses, primarily because of the more tangible nature of the skills being taught and the sense of accomplishment that students typically experience in the process of doing their own independent research.

This term I am teaching a new course for the first time: Soc 410 (Social Networks). The course provides both an introduction to methods of network analysis and an overview of the substantive sociological literature on social networks. Given the increasing attention that network analysis is receiving in both sociology and other disciplines, and considering that the department will soon have three faculty members (Light, Dreiling, and myself) who do research in this field, I see this course as a strong candidate for becoming part of the regular sociology curriculum. The course is also intended as an offering that could become part of an interdisciplinary program in social computing of the sort that I discussed earlier in connection with the initiatives of the UO faculty working group on online social networking.

My undergraduate teaching evaluations are slightly below the average for the department. As the following summary table shows, during this six-year period my overall course ratings averaged 7.9 and my overall instructor ratings averaged 8.0 (where 8.0 equals "good"). I do not report ratings for graduate courses because I believe they lack anonymity, they artificially inflate average teaching evaluations, and because University policy discourages using classes with fewer than ten students as a basis for faculty evaluation.

Course	Term	Course eval. (Q. 20)	Instructor eval. (Q. 21)
Sociology 310	Winter 2003	7.9 (z = –0.7)	8.5 (z = –0.3)
Sociology 310	Winter 2004	6.8 (z = –0.7)	6.8 (z = –0.8)
Sociology 310	Fall 2005	7.6 (z = –0.5)	7.7 (z = –0.6)
Sociology 310	Winter 2006	8.2 (z = +0.2)	8.3 (z = +0.1)
Sociology 310	Fall 2007	7.3 (z = –0.8)	7.1 (z = –0.5)
Sociology 465	Fall 2003	8.6 (z = +0.3)	8.6 (z = +0.2)
Sociology 465	Fall 2004	8.0 (z = –0.2)	7.8 (z = –0.5)
Sociology 465	Winter 2006	8.6 (z = +0.4)	8.9 (z = +0.5)
Sociology 465	Fall 2007	7.9 (z = –0.3)	7.9 (z = –0.4)
Average for 2003-present		7.9 (z = –0.26)	8.0 (z = –0.23)

I also consider my work in maintaining the website *Who Rules? An Internet Guide to Power Structure Research* to be an important contribution to undergraduate and graduate education — in addition to its value to the social science research community. This Internet site serves as the centerpiece of my Political Sociology course and is also used for instructional purposes by dozens of other faculty (both sociologists and non-sociologists) around the nation and the world. The site was initially financed with a $5,000 grant from the Northwest Academic Computing Consortium and a $15,000 grant from the University of Oregon Ed-Tech program.

Graduate Teaching.

At the graduate level I have taught primarily in the areas of sociological theory, social research methods, and political sociology. My graduate offerings during the last six years have included Classical Sociological Theory (Soc 617) Contemporary Sociological Theory (Soc 618), Methods of Social Network Analysis (Soc 613), and Methods of Qualitative Data Analysis (Soc 613). I believe that I make a valuable contribution to our graduate program, both in the variety of courses I teach and in my effort to incorporate recent developments in theory and methods into the curriculum. Good examples of this are the two advanced methods seminars I have developed in Social Network Analysis and Qualitative Data Analysis. My purpose in developing both of these courses has been to broaden the range of methodologies available to our graduate students.

Social Network Analysis uses mathematical techniques derived from graph theory to examine the structural properties of social networks. It is an increasingly popular approach in my own field of power structure research as well as in the study of epidemiology, social movements, friendship and support networks, formal organizations, communication networks, and community elite networks. Apart from my personal interest in the method, I think it is important to expose our graduate students to alternative approaches to quantitative research that are not constrained by the assumptions and data structures of conventional statistical analysis. I also appreciate the strong visual aspect of network analysis and the overlap this provides with more interpretative methods. I first taught this course in Winter 1999 and then again in Fall 2003 and Winter 2008. Several graduates of this class have incorporated methods of network analysis into their dissertations or other research.

Qualitative Data Analysis is my newest addition to the graduate curriculum. I first taught this course in Spring 2001 and then again in Fall 2004. The focus of the course is on the rapidly developing array of computer-aided techniques for analyzing qualitative data (primarily texts and transcripts). The course aims to provide students with hands-on experience with some of the latest computer software for doing qualitative data analysis, introduce them to some of the methodological issues regarding the use of computers in qualitative research, and provide them with a survey of some of the more innovative approaches to qualitative research in several substantive areas. My intent in developing the course was to encourage a more rigorous approach to qualitative research and to challenge the conventional division between qualitative and quantitative methods.

In addition to these two advanced methods courses, I continue to take responsibility for teaching a share of the required graduate theory curriculum. During this six-year period I have taught Classical Sociological Theory twice and Contemporary Sociological Theory once. In past years I have also offered a substantive graduate seminar on Topics in Political and Economic Sociology (Soc 664), although I have not had an opportunity to teach this in the last six years.

Outside the classroom, I have worked with a number of graduate students on comprehensive examination and dissertation committees, both in sociology and in other departments. During the

last six years I have served or am serving on the following dissertation committees: Sergio Romero (2004, chair), Derek Darves-Bornoz (2006), Mark Hudson (2007), Mikhail Balaev (2008, co-chair), Nicholas Harrigan (Political Science, Australian National University, 2008), and Edward Duggan (Political Science, in progress). I don't keep records on C-exam committees, but I would estimate that I typically served on roughly two per year during the period in which students were required to complete two C-exams and roughly one per year now that students are required to complete only one such exam.

SERVICE

Service to the Department

I am currently serving as Associate Department Head — a position that I also held from 2001 to 2005. During the last six years I have served on a number of departmental committees, including several that involve relatively heavy workloads. These include the Executive Committee (three years) and the Staff Development Committee (three years, all as chair). I also served two years on the Third Year (Pre-Tenure) Review Committee, three years on the Sixth Year (Post-Tenure) Review Committee (two years as chair), one year on the Course Reduction Committee, and one year on the Departmental Climate Committee. In 2005-06 I was a member of Professor James Elliott's promotion and tenure committee, and in 2006-07 I chaired Professor Caleb Southworth's promotion and tenure committee.

Service to the University

At the University level I have served four of the last six years on the University Library Committee (one year as chair) and two years on the Graduate Council. I was also a College Adviser for the College of Arts and Sciences for three years and a member of the Advisory Committee for the Oregon Survey Research Laboratory (OSRL) for two years.

Service to the Discipline

I am on the editorial boards of two journals: *Research in Political Sociology* (the official journal of the Political Sociology section of the American Sociological Association) and *Critical Sociology* (where I also serve as Secretary-Treasurer). During the past six years I have also reviewed manuscripts for numerous other journals, including flagship journals like *ASR*, *AJS*, *Social Forces*, and *Social Problems*; regional journals like *Sociological Quarterly*, *Sociological Perspectives*, and *Sociological Forum*; specialty journals like *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, *Qualitative Sociology*, and *Theory and Society*; and international journals like *Acta Sociologica* and *European Sociological Review*. I have reviewed book manuscripts for several academic publishers, two grant proposals for the National Science Foundation, and one grant proposal for the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada. I currently serve as a member of an advisory panel charged with the task of periodically meeting to review the progress of a $265,000, NSF-funded, three-year project undertaken by the American Sociological Association on "Diffusion of Innovation in Digital Libraries: Mobilizing Networks to Increase the Scope and Depth of Use of a New Cyber Infrastructure."